



Thirteen counties to participate in AmeriCorps Farm to School

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MADISON – Wisconsin students in five more counties will benefit this fall from AmeriCorps Farm to School Programs. The Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) has announced that a total of thirteen counties will now participate in AmeriCorps Farm to School, serving 39 individual school districts.

“Twenty eight AmeriCorps members will be teaching students how their food is grown and connecting schools with farms across Wisconsin,” said Mike Powers, DATCP’s Division of Ag Development Administrator. “We are pleased that for 2013-2014 we’ll offer the service to thirteen counties, including these new sites.”

AmeriCorps Farm to School promotes healthy eating habits, decreases childhood obesity and increases access to local foods in school. The program identifies and addresses hurdles facing school districts serving local foods and provides nutrition education for students from kindergarten through twelfth grade.

“Since 2008, AmeriCorps Farm to School has seen great results generating community support, building school gardens, connecting Wisconsin producers to school food service and creating curriculum,” added Sarah Larson, DATCP’s AmeriCorps Farm to School Program Manager.

“AmeriCorps Farm to School serves rural and urban communities, and each year we continue to see new goals and ideas that will improve the program and make a long-term impact on Wisconsin.”

This year's sites plan to expand their reach by involving grocery stores in their work and incorporating AmeriCorps Farm to School into afterschool and family-focused events. A goal of AmeriCorps Farm to School is to improve community, grower and school relationships.

New sites will be hosted in the following counties: Dunn, Dane (Mount Horeb), Vilas, Richland and Winnebago. Counties continuing to hosts sites include: Ashland, Bayfield, Brown, Crawford, Dane (Madison), Portage, Vernon, Washburn and Waupaca. Each of these Farm to School sites will have a minimum of one full-time or two half-time AmeriCorps members to engage the community.

A full list of school districts and more information on AmeriCorps Farm to School is available at http://datep.wi.gov/Business/Buy_Local_Buy_Wisconsin/Farm_to_School_Program. For additional details, contact Sarah Larson at Sarahm.larson@wisconsin.gov or 608-224-5017.

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